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PEACE THROUGH NATIONAL DEFENSE

By ANNE ROGERS MINOR

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THE war in Europe, terrible and hateful as it all is, is awakening a new patriotism in the United States. We see clearly the weakness of our position when forced to make demands of other nations. We see our almost defenseless coasts, our slow-growing navy and our very inadequate army. The grim realization of these facts is forced upon us, and we now know it would be criminal for us to persist longer in our traditional policy of unpreparedness and ignorance—a policy which has continued from the beginnings of the republic and which cost us more in blood, treasure and needless war than anything else in our history.

The people of the United States want peace, and we look for some method of assuring ourselves not only of the continuance of the peace which we now enjoy, but more than that, for the acquisition of power to help promote peace in other nations. We want national defense not for war, but to promote more perfect peace. It was a soldier, William Tecumseh Sherman, who said: "The legitimate object of war is more perfect peace."

How are we to maintain that peace which we have long enjoyed, that peace which is the highest ideal of our national life and without which we can not preserve the free institutions which our forefathers fought to establish? How are we to help to promote peace in other nations without the strength to make our protests effective. The answer is national defense, or power to enforce peace. In other words, that power which inspires such respect for us in other nations as will forbid their attacking us. No truer words were ever spoken than these of Bayard Taylor's "Peace the offspring is of Power."

Up to a little more than a year ago we did not believe that such a war as is being waged in Europe to-day was possible. We had hoped that war between civilized nations was a thing of the past, but our hopes were suddenly blasted when the most enlightened nations of the earth were caught in the same passions of war as the veriest savages, less indiscriminately cruel perhaps, but just as blind in their frenzy of patriotic love and hate. These events have proved only too clearly that, no matter how highly civilized nations may appear to be, when their national safety seems at stake, or their national interests menaced, civilization and restraint are thrown to the winds, treaties and compacts are forgotten, whole races spurred by sudden savage hatred plunge headlong into war to the death with other races whom they hailed a short time before as friends and brothers. In the light of these facts, it is folly to say that war and aggression are things of the past, and that na-

tional humility and confidence in our own good intent, and in the high moral civilization of our neighboring nations, are sufficient guards against attack and disaster. We must profit by the lessons from the battlefields of Europe and not allow the futile and emotional cries of theorists and reformers for "peace, peace when there is no peace" blind us to the stern facts and realities which confront us and threaten not only our peace but our national existence.

A no doubt well-intentioned, but misguided, movement is being agitated among us which threatens to sap the strength of the nation and if not arrested bids fair to rob us of many of the sturdy qualities which are the mainstay of the republic. I refer to pacificism or the theory of "peace at any price"—a doctrine of absolute non-resistance. We must remember that we should not exist as a nation to-day if the men of '76 had believed in this theory. If carried to extremes it would amount to no less than treason in hours of national peril. When ordinarily sensible and high-minded people say to me that, even if an invader should approach our shores, we should let him enter and take possession, that we should offer no resistance, but allow him to violate our sacred liberties, I am lost in bewilderment at the kind of mind or soul which seems so lost to the fundamental instincts of self-defense implanted in the whole animate creation. Are we to put our faith in peace ships while the doctrine of brute force, the self-acknowledged creed of one great nation that "Might is Right" still stalks abroad in the world, leaving its trail of blood and death on the fair fields of Europe? Shall we put our faith in peace ships when the ships of militarism cross the ocean and train their engines of death on our defenseless shores? God forbid that any such sentimental folly should ever replace the spirit of America, the spirit that made us a nation, the spirit that actuated the men of Concord and Lexington and Valley Forge. To imagine such a possibility is an insult to the memory of those patriots who sprang to the defense of their home-land against tyranny and outrage; an insult to their brave wives and daughters and sweethearts who bade them go in God's name, and then did men's work at home that the nation might live. We see this spirit to-day in the women of France, yet there are those who dare to summon them to talk of peace in conventions, while their homes are burning and their land is devastated and their husbands and sons are slain by the ruthless god of "Might is Right." What they want now is not "peace at any price." They want the kind of peace that can never be broken again. Is pacificism likely to bring this about? Can pacificism stay the onward course of a triumphant militarism armed to the teeth? Could pacificism have helped Belgium in her hour of horror and need? Is it a man's part, or a woman's either, for that matter, to stand by idly theorizing, while the strong attack the weak, and treaties are proclaimed

to be naught but scraps of paper? What constitutes the binding force of a treaty in the mind of a nation that can so regard a treaty? Obviously nothing but a gun, since agreements and promises mean nothing. Insidious and secret war is already being waged upon us, a neutral nation, within our own borders by conspirators and spies to whom treaties and honor mean nothing. Our peace is threatened, our right to pursue our industrial interests undisturbed has been violated; our right to travel the high seas is denied; and American lives are sacrificed; internal disorders and lawlessness are instigated by the same power that trampled defenseless Belgium under foot. What are we going to do about it? After nine months of silence we uttered a protest against the slaughter of our citizens at sea and the violation of every sentiment of humanity and civilization. "What are you going to do about it?" was the reply, as plainly said as though uttered in words, and then the Arabic was sunk. We were told to keep off the high seas, where we have a right to go in pursuit of lawful business; we were told to keep from taking passage on ships of belligerents, even though they were innocent merchantmen, so that violations of international law and humanity might go on undisturbed. And pacifists would have us keep off, and continue the policy of polite letter-writing, while more innocent lives are sacrificed to the god of Might-is-Right. If we had had something besides ink to feed the power of Mr. Wilson's pen the results might have been different. But we had not and Germany knew it. "The pen is mightier than the sword" in all cases except—that of a scrap of paper. If human liberty, civilization and self-government go down to final death in the trenches of Europe under the assaults of militarism, will a defenseless pacifism save us from a like fate?

Pacifists tell us they do not mean disarmament, but they do mean that we should not increase our present total inadequate defenses.

Disarmament would be a splendid thing under certain conditions; it is what we all want; but to be effective it must be universal and simultaneous. We believe that through national defense this dream of disarmament will eventually come true. It is not true now, and until mankind reaches a stage of development that will admit of complete disarmament, our only safety lies in increasing our defenses.

There is no equality between one man armed and another man disarmed, and so it is with nations. Stable and equal conditions of peace can exist only between equally armed nations or equally disarmed nations, such as the United States and Canada. But between armed Europe and an unarmed America there is no equality and therefore there can be no security of continued peace. In the midst of the raging "sea of war" in Europe to-day there is what has been well named a little "island of peace." This is the wonderful little nation of Switzerland, respected, untouched, inviolate. And why? Because she is a

nation armed to the teeth—every citizen a trained soldier. She is equal to her armed neighbors, yet without standing army or militaristic methods. Opposed to militarism, on the one hand, as strongly as she is opposed to “peace at any price” doctrines, on the other, she nevertheless maintains herself in a condition of continued peace even in the midst of surrounding war. While we in America stand around theorizing, and talking of universal peace in conventions and sending out peace ships to ask the dogs of war in Europe please to let go of each other’s throats, this little country has turned itself into a nation of soldiers through a system of voluntary compulsory military service—voluntary because the nation voluntarily chose to submit itself to this means of national defense. More thoroughly democratic than we are ourselves, they have nevertheless realized that compulsory universal service is their only guarantee of national independence, and they have had since 1874 a veritable citizen army, in which every able-bodied citizen is a trained soldier and not one, except the general and his staff, a professional military man. To an article in *The National Geographic Magazine* for November, 1915, I am indebted for these facts and for the following figures. With a smaller population than that of Massachusetts and an area twice the latter’s size, Switzerland can mobilize 240,000 trained soldiers in twenty-four hours. At the same rate we could mobilize 8,000,000. Besides these men, the Swiss have as many more in reserve, so that under this system we could have in the field a trained army of 16,000,000 men within twenty-four hours. The founders of our country laid down the same idea of a citizen soldiery; the only difference is, the Swiss have put it into serious practise, while we theorize and make laws which we never enforce. In principle, every citizen is supposed to join the militia. Does he? And how many Americans know how to shoot to hit the mark, or have ever handled a gun? As a sharp contrast, the Swiss boy begins at ten years of age to take the gymnastics that fit him for military training, and he learns how to shoot like William Tell—substituting bullets for arrows. Every man cheerfully sacrifices a definite amount of his time toward the maintenance of the one thing dear to every Swiss—as to every American—his independence as a citizen of a free country, and the amount of time is exceedingly little. During the first year of liability to military service at the age of seventeen, he gives up seventy-five days, but only eleven days in each successive year.

His training is in the field, not in drill rooms, and he spends less on military taxes than any other nation. The burdens of preparedness are thus spread over the whole nation, and lie heavy upon no one individual. There are no “crack” regiments; no picking and choosing in the service. Each man goes where he is sent and can serve best. There is no caste system. Brains and ability win the high places;

all start from the ranks. Our militia system has much to learn before it can be compared with the Swiss citizen army of defenders—for defenders they are. Not one foot of territory do they wish to acquire. Not a blow would they strike in aggression, but let him who strikes at them beware what he does! This is the ideal of national defense, which is the inalienable right of every man, of every woman, of every nation to defend itself against attack. Herein lie self-respect and a national dignity impervious to insult, because it is above insult. "Though surrounded on all sides by belligerent millions" (to quote from the aforesaid article) whose interests might be served by asking her to step out of their path, Switzerland to-day stands an island of peace in a sea of war, because she has prepared to maintain her neutrality and her freedom, or at least to exact such a price for them that none of the nations at war can afford to pay for their violation." What an object lesson for us. While in a country so large as ours it would be the height of folly to give up our regular standing army—say rather, it should be increased—it ought to be practicable to so remodel our militia as to approach nearer to the wonderful efficiency of the citizen army of Switzerland. If to such an army we would but add an adequate navy and sea-coast defense, we should be invincible. This would not militarize us as a nation; it would train us simply in efficient self-defense, whereby alone we can inspire, respect and maintain peace and liberty.

Therefore to secure peace for our own country in years to come a policy of strong national defense is necessary until such time as the probability of war is reduced to much below the present ratio.

We believe that it would be just as unwise for the United States to allow its army and navy to deteriorate, as it would be for a householder to allow the fire-insurance policy on his house to lapse because he disapproved of fires and hoped there would be no more of them! One of the fundamental laws of our government—of any government—is the protection of persons and property and it should be our national resolve to be strong enough to protect the weak from the aggressions of the powerful who are also unscrupulous, and the innocent from the violence of criminals, whether individuals or nations.

It is not sufficient that this country should merely defend its own citizens; it must, as it did in those first years of the nineteenth century, take its share in the burdens of maintaining law throughout the world. "Man lives not to himself alone" is as true of nations as of individuals. Government is organized defense of others. The nation that will not protect its citizens at home and abroad has no right to the name of nation for it lacks the essentials of government.

One reason why Americans have a right to be proud of their nation's history is that in the earliest days of its life, when its population was

small and its resources limited, the United States showed itself willing to sacrifice blood and treasure for the protection of the rights of its citizens. Against England in 1812 it set itself for the sake of defending the freedom of the sea.

Still earlier in its history, when it had many domestic difficulties to contend with, it undertook to rid the Mediterranean of the Barbary pirates who infested it. You know the results. Should we not now, when we are large and rich and strong, protect our own citizens on the high seas and be able to take our share in the burdens of maintaining law throughout the world? It is a plain duty that we should; and if we are to take our full part, we must have the means by which to take it. The disorderly and lawless are not quelled by words or diplomatic notes. We must have some method of establishing justice and some means of defending justice with arms. The American people must not be content until this nation is fit to take part in the world's work, and all patriotic Americans should unite in insisting that we have adequate national defense. As descendants of the patriots of the American revolution, we owe a distinctive duty to our country to uphold our institutions and our national dignity and to stand ready at all times with the spirit of highest patriotism to guard and protect our rights and privileges and that liberty for which our ancestors fought. National defense was the keynote sounded by Washington when he said "To be prepared for war is the most effective means of promoting peace," and he further said:

There is a rank due the United States among nations which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war.

Another patriot, Charles Pinckney, voiced the same spirit of defense when he said:

Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute.

President Wilson expressed his views on national preparedness a few weeks ago, when he said:

I would not feel that I was discharging the solemn obligations I owe to the country were I not to speak in terms of the deepest solemnity of the urgency and necessity of preparing ourselves to guard and protect the rights and privileges of our people, our sacred heritage of the fathers who struggled to make us an independent nation. Come, let us renew our allegiance to America, conserve her strength in its purity, make her chief among those who serve mankind, self-reverenced, self-commended, mistress of all forces of quiet council, strong above all others in good will and the might of invincible justice and right.

The war in Europe to-day has awakened in us a new realization of the profound truth of these words I have quoted from Washington, our

first, and from Wilson our latest president. To defend the heritage of our fathers is a sacred duty. The spirit of our fathers calls us like the minute men of old to our country's defense. Not in weakness, but in power lie the foundations of that continued peace which is the highest ideal of a true, loyal and enlightened patriotism.

IMMUNITY OF MONUMENTS, MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL STRUC- TURES IN WAR AND PEACE

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ENCOURAGING advances have been made in the United States and in foreign countries in the preservation of natural and architectural landmarks in time of peace, but the events of the European war which began the summer before last have emphasized in a painful way the need for some international agreement which will secure the immunity of historical monuments, museums, libraries and works of art generally in time of war. If the civilized nations of the world have not yet so far outgrown their primitive passions as to be able to settle international differences by means other than slaughter and destruction, it would seem practicable to mitigate at least the losses of war by preserving historical monuments, cathedrals, civic buildings, libraries and works of art. The existence of these in no way affects the fortunes of war, but their destruction robs civilization of the evidences of its progress, obliterates forever the products of the genius of former generations, and causes the animosities engendered by the war to rankle in the hearts of men for generations to come.

In any war, the greatest destruction in these respects is naturally inflicted in the country invaded and by the invaders. People do not destroy their own treasures if they can help it. It therefore happens that in the present European war, Belgium and France have been the chief sufferers, and in a lesser degree the Polish provinces and even England. But it is not intended by this statement to imply that the invaders in the present case are more ruthless than other nationalities have been in the past. In the conflict between Italy and Austria, the destruction of Görtz or Goritza, and the damage done by bombs in Venice offer a sad reciprocity in the infliction of useless injury.

The history of the famous Alexandrian library is sufficiently polyglot in this respect. Part of the library—the largest in the ancient world, embracing the collected literature of Rome, Greece, India and Egypt—was destroyed by fire during the siege by Julius Cæsar. Another